

Message Text

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SUBJ: PRESS COMMENT ON JAMES W HARGROVE

1. THE FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE MELBOURNE AGE
DECEMBER27:

2. QTE. THE UNKNOWN AMERICAN

THE REPORT THAT A TEXAS BUSINESS CONSULTANT AND FORMER U.S.
ASSISTANT POSTMASTER-GENERAL IS THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR-
DESIGNATE TO AUSTRALIA WILL HAVE GENERATED SOME PUZZLE-
MENT, AND PERHAPS A LITTLE CHAGRIN, IN CANBERRA. MR.
JAMES WARD HARGROVE HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS INNER QTE THE
UNKNOWN AMERICAN END INNER QTE - AND IN AMERICA, TOO. FEEL-
INGS OF OFF HANDEDNESS IN THE REPORTED APPOINTMENT ARE IN-
TENSIFIED BY THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS AND THE EXEMPLARY
PROFESSIONALISM OF THE PREVIOUS AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, MR.
MARSHALL GREEN. WE HAVE ALREADY SUFFERED THE SLIGHTLY
UNNERVING EXPERIENCE OF BEING WITHOUT AN AMERICAN AMBASSA-
DOR IN CANBERRA FOR FIVE MONTHS.

3. QTE. AUSTRALIA, AS WELL AS AMERICA, WAS WELL SERVED BY
THE PROFESSIONAL BRIDGE-BUILDING OF MR. MARSHALL GREEN.
HE ACCOMMODATED IN A REALISTIC WAY TO THE MORE INDEPENDENT
STANCE STRUCK BY THE WHITLAM GOVERNMENT IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS -
AND HE ALSO HELPED IN SOME ESSENTIAL FENCE MENDING

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AFTER LABOR'S MAVERICK MINISTERS, MESSRS. CAIRNS,

UREN AND CAMERON, HAD STRAINED RELATIONS BY EXERCISING THEIR CONSCIENCES BEYOND THE MINISTERIAL WRIT. UNTIL THE GREEN APPOINTMENT, AMERICA HAD NEVER REGARDED THE POST AS DEMANDING THE TALENT OF A REALLY TOP MAN. THE INNER QTE ALL THE WAY WITH LBJ END INNER QTE LINE WHICH HAROLD HOLT ARTICULATED WAS A FAIR SUMMATION OF AUSTRALIA S RELATIONSHIP FROM THE SECOND WORLD WAR ON.

4. QTE IF THE STRIDENT TONE OF SOME OF AMERICA S CRITICS IN THE FIRST WHITLAM GOVERNMENT HELPED TO CONFIRM MR. GREEN S ARRIVAL ON THE SCENE, THAT MAY HAVE BEEN ALL TO THE GOOD. FOR WHAT DEVELOPED WAS A CHANGED, BUT ESSENTIALLY HEALTHY, CLIMATE OF INTER-RELATIONS, PARTICULARLY IN THE WAKE OF THE NIXON RESIGNATION, WHICH MARKED THE FACT THAT AMERICA TOO WAS CHANGEING. THE ISSUE OF AMERICAN BASES WAS LARGELY DEFUSED, WITH A NEW AGREEMENT EARLY LAST YEAR ON A RETURN OF LAND AND STEPPED UP AUSTRALIAN INVOLVEMENT IN NORTH WEST CAPE. THERE ARE ONGOING QUESTIONS OF IMPORTANCE RANGING FROM REGIONAL SECURITY TO TRADE, RESOURCES, INVESTMENT AND LOCAL EQUITY. BUT IT SEEMS AGREED THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA AND AMERICA ARE IN GOOD REPAIR.

5. QTE. WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. FRASER, HAS RECENTLY STRESSED THE PRE-EMINENCE OF THE AMERICAN CONNECTION IN OUR FOREIGN RELATIONS, ANY TREND TO DOWN-GRADING OF THE AMBASSADORSHIP AT THE AMERICAN END WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE. A REVERSION TO THE PRACTICE OF POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS MIGHT BE TOKENISM TWICE OVER IF APPLIED BY PRESIDENT FORD WHO HIMSELF SEEMS TO BE MOVING INTO THE WILDERNESS OF A LAME-DUCK PRESIDENCY.

6. QTE. ALTHOUGH HI IS NOT A HIGH-POWERED CAREER DIPLOMAT, MR. HARGROVE WILL BE ABLE TO EXPECT A WARM WELCOME AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF A NATION WITH WHOSE PEOPLE AUSTRALIANS FEELS SO MANY COMMON BONDS, IN LANGUAGE, IN ASPIRATIONS AND IDEALS. AS A BUSINESSMAN. MR. HARGROVE WILL RECOGNISE THAT IT WILL NEVER BE INNER QTE BUSINESS AS USUAL END INNER QTE AGAIN IN TERMS OF THE BLANK CHEQUE SUBSERVIENCE WHICH FOR SO LONG MARKED POST-WAR RELATIONSHIPS. AMERICA S EXCESSIVE TENDENCIES TO PROTECTIONISM, UNCLASSIFIED

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THE GROWING AUSTRALIAN DEMAND FOR GREATER EQUITY IN PROJECTS HERE, FOR MORE CONTROL AND WISER USE OF RESOURCES, WILL CONTINUE TO CREATE QUITE PROPER AREAS OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT BETWEEN US. GIVEN A CLIMATE OF GOOD WILL AND CONSULTATION, THE FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BOTH COUNTRIES, BASED ON A MUTUALITY OF INTERESTS, WILL GROW STRONGER WITH TIME. END QTE
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